

REBEL DESTINY

614 clan names. He went to his mother's brother, and asked for the origin of his own clan, and the relationship that existed between the lo to which he belonged and the others.

"It is for the old men to know," his uncle replied. "When you are old, you will know these things."

"But you must tell me. It is my right," the young man insisted.

"It will be your right," the older man corrected him.

And there the matter rested. But from one, and from another, we gathered the clan names. One village belonged to one clan, its obia was confided to us, and at another village we learned the name of still another clan. So the list of names slowly grew—ten, twelve, thirteen, fourteen. But some clans were paired in a fashion we could not fathom, and when the clans are grouped so as to express the tribe as a whole, the expression that is used is that of "the twelve lo."

614 493 The clan we found to be rooted deep in the land. Each clan had its own territory, and in the region it controlled only the men of the clan might fish in the creeks or fell the hardwood trees which the white man in the city bought. All of the up-river clans had land on the lower river near the railhead, and an important down-river clan, like that of the Gankwe people, had land deep in the interior. Whether fear of invasion, on the one hand, or the need to have their own strongholds in the event of factional disputes, on the other, dictated this division of the land, it was, of course, impossible to determine. Yet it was unquestionably useful for a clan to have representation up and down the river in this fashion. Thus a man, as he traveled up or down the river, would be sure of at least one or two places where he might count on receiving the welcome due him as one who is at home among those who have come from the same "old mother," and where he might feel spiritually safe among people of his own blood, and among the same gods as those of his own village.

631 619 Village, clan, and above these the tribe. So it was that the political order of the Bush Negro was integrated. Tribal

## THE COUNCIL OF THE ELDERS

assemblies such as were reported from the Awka people on the Marowyne were here not called regularly. There was no central body here to make decisions. The autonomy of village and clan seemed almost unquestioned. There were, to be sure, clan alliances, but these bore more directly on the factions which had formed to control the choice of the next headman. At this krutu, therefore, which had just gathered, there were Captain Sungi, head of the Kasito or Dahomey clan, and And'u, the able chief of the Dombi people, and the headman of the Popoto people, and the headman of the Anago. But Fandya of Baikutu who headed the Nasi people was not there, nor were the Awana people represented, nor the Alabaisa, nor Kwama, nor Bi'ito, nor Fandaki, to cite some examples. Of the missing chiefs, several of them lived a considerable distance from the seat of the Granman, and indeed had been to his village but few times.

"Ai, men must krutu," Kasanya had told us one day on the river. "If a few men decide, then the others have anger in their hearts. That is not good. When the lanti meets, and all men talk, then those who came with anger cool their hearts. Talk is good."

And another time, Sedefo had found occasion to quote the proverb, "If you have not settled one thing, you cannot go on to the second." The best way was to talk things over until all men saw that what was proposed was good or bad.

## 4

In the krutu house of Asindopo Lantiwe the Granman began to speak.

"Mati—friends—the white man has come. He sits there. With him is his wife. She is there beside him. The man from the white man's city has come. He is there. He will speak for the white man. The white man has a cook. The cook is outside."

"So it is, G'aman," said Captain Sungi.

"Mati, the white man came. All who come to me must eat. The white man must eat."

"True, true, master of the realm."

/7 cont./

101 4th. Bonnie /Böni/ Negroes, living on the river above Marowyné;  
 [175] until 1862 they were in a state of slavery among the  
 [567] Aucaners, but at that time, through the intervention of  
 the government, they were released from it. Their name  
 is supposed to be derived from a former runaway slave who  
 had placed himself at their head.

### Chapter III

#### Government, Laws, Administration of Justice

643  
 [292] Each of these tribes, except for the Bonnie Negroes, has  
 a chief whom they call granman (governor); the uniform given  
 to him by the government is a blue tunic with epaulets and a  
 cocked hat with white plush.

Among the Aucaners the chief is called Byman, a cunning,  
 courageous, and prudent man, around 63 years old.

The chief of the Saramaccaners is called Abram, an infirm  
 old man who is very weak of character and has little influence.

The Mantoewari Negroes have a chief called Kalkoen, who,  
 although aged and infirm, can nonetheless still be called firm of  
 character.

• 631 /8/ Under their chief they have a certain number of captains  
 and council members. The former are divided into bush captains,  
 who take command in case of war, and into house or land cap-  
 [554] tains, who deal with internal matters with the chief. The token  
 of their prestige given to them by the government consists of a  
 large staff with a round silver ball (drum-major's stick), on which  
 is the Netherlands coat of arms with "Je maintiendrai."

344 They have a large open shed which serves them as court  
 and which they call kroetoehoso (probably derived from the English  
 "courthouse").

622 Their legislation is very limited. One who kills another  
 is punished with death; one who poisons someone suffers death by  
 torture, provided that substantial irrefutable proof exists. (See  
 Chapter XI below.) If the death penalty is not appropriate, the